

Name	Somesh Kumar Sharma
Department	Management Studies
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SYNOPSIS

Issues related to research methodology increasingly occupy a central role in the field of International Positioning Process. It is becoming clear that greater attention to methodological issues is essential for the development of this field into a management discipline.

Many efforts have been made to distinguish the disciplines/practices in international business. However, the field is still criticized for lack of theories and absence of paradigm. A recent survey of literature noted that the field has made more progress in finding research questions than in answering them, one of them being Identifying Dimensions for the International Positioning Process (IPP) for defence goods. This is largely because of lack of a theoretical foundation continued to plague international business research.

Research in International Business is at critical crossroad today, with increased emphasis on developing theoretical concepts and testing empirical relationships rooted in such concepts. Such a transformation critically depends on conceptualizing and operationalizing the derivative constructs in an international business environment. This is motivated by management's desire to gain profits and competitive advantage through appropriate market selection, right market entry mode decision and competitive positioning techniques. The combination of these three aspects of international business, leads to the development of the concept, called International positioning process (IPP).

While researchers have made significant efforts on new techniques and approaches of international positioning processes, certain important issues remain largely unexplored. First, it is not challenging to find methodologies and approaches for market selection, entry mode choice and global competitive advantage, but in understanding how to blend them together for tailoring IPP. There is a need for developing holistic model for customized IPP that aims on translating positioning process into global competitive advantage. Another observable omission in the past literature is the missing link among three components of positioning process: market selection, entry mode choice and competitive positioning.

To address this neglect, the present study attempts to develop a model for global positioning process. Development of a significant bond among three components of

global positioning process, not only creates harmony among them, but aims to make IPP more effective.

The study aims to develop set of dimensions for the construct, international positioning process (IPP). Specifically the objectives of this study are as under,

- To conceptualize a multi- variable construct IPP.
- To develop information framework for IPP.
- To evaluate/analyze the dimensions developed for IPP, such that they satisfactorily fulfill reliability properties.
- To differentiate IPP across industries and develop generic and industry- specific model.
- To operationalise the model for defence industry.
- To evolve comprehensive set of conclusions for IPP.

In an attempt to achieve these objectives, this study attempts to integrate three aspects of international business: market selection, entry mode decision and competitive positioning of goods/services, and evolved the concept of International Positioning Process. The study identifies 91 variables for IPP through exhaustive literature review and develops an information framework that comprises four cardinal dimensions, twelve adjuvant dimensions and 35 decision variables. The information mentioned in the framework, is evaluated using statistical tool package – R, and refined using factor analysis. The primary data was collected using structured questionnaire by eliciting response from 329 International Business Companies (IBCs) which are involved in international business. The data of 329 IBCs explored that all the four cardinal dimensions, mentioned in the framework, are the reliable steps for IPP. The outcome of analysis develops the generic model for IPP that comprises 19 highly influencing decision variables in contrast to 91 variables available in the literature, which are finally summarized into 4 statistically significant steps for effective IPP.

To tailor the customised and industry specific model for IPP, it was imperative to study how IPP differs across the industries. The difference in international positioning paradigm across the industries, analysed with multivariate discriminant analysis, one way ANOVA and factor analysis, indicates defence industry as most sensitive for making international business decisions. It evolves that defence industry seeks more safe, focused and efficient international positioning strategy for the international positioning of its products. This study attempts to customize the IPP model for defence goods which has not been addressed in the literature yet. The study explores set of highly influencing decision variables for international positioning of defence products, which are finally summarized into 4 statistically significant steps.

The model is operationalised for Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) of India. It assesses international marketing capability of DRDO, identifies suitable markets, and makes decision for appropriate market entry modes and competitive positioning of selected defence goods. The study evolved five most suitable international markets for selected DRDO systems. Risk analysis is performed for all the identified markets to evaluate suitability of the market and to decide entry modes. The IPP model for defence industry is successfully implemented in one of the identified markets i.e. Malaysia, for the target DRDO systems. The study evolves that defence

organizations attain more effectiveness in international positioning process through holistic mode as compared to extended & traditional modes. However, like any other study this does provide scope for further research and IPP can be a candidate for further extensions and refinements.